Loss of Forest cover due to Fire in Rajasthan

167. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the estimated annual loss of forest cover due to fire in Rajasthan;

(b) what measures have been taken to prevent and also to control fires in areas where forest fires are frequent; and

(c) what is Government's policy in regard to the development of forests and what are the details of assistance given to the State during the last three years for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI): (a) Estimated average annual area burnt in forest fires in the past three years in Rajasthan, is 1927 hectares.

(b) The State Forest Department take numerous fire prevention and control measures, such as clearance and maintenance of fire lines, controlled burning, putting out fires that may alight, creatig counter-fires, seeking people's cooperation in preventing and putting out fires etc.

(c) The Government policy in regard to development of forests in the country is protection and augmentation of forest resources. The details of the amounts utilised for the various schemes of afforestation in the State of Rajasthan in the last three years are as under:—

Year	Amount utilised (Rs. in lakhs)
1985-86	1536.80
1986-87	3376.13
1987-88	2847.84

Encashment of Currency Notes Marked for Destruction

168. SHRI KAILASH PATI MISHRA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news-item of August 9, 1988 published in the Bombay edition of the 'Times of India' to the effect that a large number of soiled and non-issuable currency notes marked out for destruction have been again received and exchanged for fresh notes at the Bhubaneshwar office of the Reserve Bank of India after the introduction of short-cut methods to destroy the mutilated notes like Emergency Procedure (E.P.), Modified Procedure (M.P.) and Special Procedure (S.P.); if so, what is the number of such instances that have come to notice and the amount so involved in each case;

(b) whether mutilated notes which had already been replaced at the Patna Office of the Reserve Bank of India but were not burnt, were used again for obtaining fresh notes in the Bhubaneshwar office; if so, what is the amount involved in this case; and

(c) what are the revised guidelines for destruction of such notes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) The Reserve Bank of India has informed that some quantities of cancelled notes in the denomination of Rs. 100/- had been presented at the Reserve Bank of India's Bhubaneshwar Office and payment obtained fraudulently. It was not due to the so-called short-cut method adopted to destroy the notes. In the Bhubaneshwar Office of the Reserve Bank of India, destruction of notes is done under normal procedures. The amount involved in the incident at the Bhubaneshwar office has been assessed at Rs. 12,30,800 comprising

12303 pieces of notes in the denomination of Rs. 100/-.

(b) So far, there is no evidence that the cancelled notes presented at the Bhubaneshwar office of the Reserve Bank of India were actually those meant for destruction at the Reserve Bank of India's office at Patna. The case has been entrusted to Central Bureau of Investigation.

(c) No revised guidelines have been issued by the Resesrve Bank of India for destruction of such notes as the existing guidelines have stood the test of time. The Reserve Bank of India has, however, impressed on all its office to follow the existing checks and precautions meticulously. The Reserve Bank of India has also constituted a special team to go round its office for surprise checks so that the prescribed procedures are strictly followed.

Damage to barbed wire fence erected along Indo-Pak Border due to floods

169. SHRI HARVENDRA SINGH HANSPAL: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the barbed-wire fence erected along the Indo-Pakistan border with a view to stopping infiltration of terrorists into Punjab from across the border has been badly damaged and at many places washed away due to the recent floods; and

(b) if so, what steps Government have taken in the matter and by when the repair work of the damaged portions is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) According to information furnished by C.P.W.D. about 30 Km. stretch, out of 83 Km. of fencing fully completed and 10 Km. partially done so far, has been partially/fully damaged due to the unprecedented floods of September, 1988.

(b) The damaged portion would be repaired/replaced as required as soon as the area, presently totally slushy and unapproachable, becomes fit for reconstruction activity.

Communal disturbances in Uttar Pradesh

170. SHRI D. B. CHANDRE GOWDA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether communal disturbances recently flared up in several parts of Uttar Pradesh;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) what steps the Central Government have taken to bring normalcy in the disturbed areas of Uttar Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (c) According to the Government of Uttar Pradesh, the recent communal violence in Muzzaffarnagar, Khatauli, Aligarh, Faizabad and some other places in Uttar Pradesh was due to the 'bandh' organised by the V.H.P. on 8th October, 1988, in response to the proposed march to Ayodhya on October 14, 1988, by the members of the coordination committee of the Babri Masjid movement. The VHP's followers attempted to get shops/establishments closed which resulted in altercation and group clashes. As per the available information, the communal violence which occurred at Aligarh, Muzaffarnagar, Khatauli and Faizabad, 36 persons were killed and 154 were injured.